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## NOVEL AND SINGULAR MODE OF RELEIVING NERVOUS COMPLAINTS.

In a London medical work entitled *The Doctor*, are given the particulars of an interesting case of neuralgia, or *tic douloureux*, which, it appears, after having been treated with the usual medicines for more than two years, with little or no remission of the painful symptoms attending it, yielded at length to a new and extraordinary remedy, in the shape of a *metal magnet*. The experiments tried upon the occasion promise results of such considerable interest and practical importance to the health perhaps of thousands, that we shall offer no apology to our readers for copying the history of the cure and the accompanying details into our columns, premising only, that while we individually place every reliance on the good faith of the witnesses who attest the facts recorded, we do not consider ourselves bound to vouch for their statement authoritatively to others, or draw any inference of a positive kind with respect to a remedy, of the nature and effects of which, after all, it is properly the province of the faculty alone to form a judgment.

"Our readers (observes the writer) will remember the interesting case of neuralgia of the finger, at St Thomas's Hospital, upon which Dr Elliotson stated, in a clinical lecture, that he had exhausted his store of remedial agents, without developing a shade of improvement. [The remedies resorted to primarily were, carbonate of iron, cyanuret of potass, strychnine, croton oil, hydrocyanic acid, and extract of belladonna.] A more severe case, probably, was never subjected to treatment. The man left the hospital for a time, totally unrelieved, but soon afterwards returned, when, in accordance with a suggestion, as Dr Elliotson has since observed, of a correspondent of our own, the *colchicum autumnale* was tried in the case, without, however, the slightest benefit being derived therefrom. The sedative powers of the *lobelia inflata* then suggested to Dr Elliotson the propriety of giving the patient the chance of that medicine. The grounds on which it was employed proved to be in some measure correctly founded. The man took the *lobelia*, in increasing doses, every hour, beginning with seven drops of the tincture, and adding a drop to each progressive dose, until as large a quantity had been reached as could be taken without deranging the functions of the stomach. Some amelioration of the affection followed this treatment. The patient, who was before unable even to cross the ward, or bear without excruciating agony the slightest contact with his finger-nails, and had become emaciated to the extremest degree, from pain and sleeplessness, was now enabled to walk a little way and enjoy intervals of rest, partly recovered his good looks, and became comparatively cheerful.

The relief, however, was very far from being either perfect or permanent. In fact, the continued exhibition of the medicine was demanded to secure any portion of rest.

A short time since, however, a new remedial agent presented itself, in the form of the *magnet*. The hospital was visited, first by Dr Kyle, and subsequently by Dr Blundell, who followed up the application begun by Dr Kyle. The *lobelia inflata* was allowed by Dr Elliotson to be suspended, and the effect of the magnet tried. That effect was, to the surprise of all who witnessed it, a most decided one; the pain was, on every application of the instrument, removed, and continued absent for several hours.

On Tuesday last [in June 1833], Dr Blundell attended the hospital at the hour of Dr Elliotson's visit, when, in the presence of the pupils and our reporter, he drew forth the magnet, and commenced its application to the patient's finger.

The instrument is of the horse-shoe form, about ten inches in its long axis, and five in its short, composed of five layers of metal, the central being the longest, and the whole bound with stout ribbon. The patient was at the time apparently suffering considerable pain, and unable to use his hand. The north pole of the magnet was gently passed five or six times down the sides and back of the middle finger, and then rested on the central joint. The result was such an immediate cessation of suffering, that he could gnash his fingers into the palm of his hand with ease and comfort, and he declared himself to be entirely relieved. The power of the instrument, however, did not cease here. Dr Blundell showed that it possessed the means of reproducing the pain in the most intense form. The south pole of the magnet was directed along the finger. At the third pass the patient began to bite his lip and close his eyes with an expression of pain. At a few

passes more his chin was spasmodically buried in his breast, and his wrinkled features expressed the acutest suffering. This was allowed to continue for a few seconds, when the north pole was again presented to the finger, and the agony speedily subsided. The spectators then left the man lying with a countenance perfectly tranquil.

At the extremity of the ward lay an elderly lady, a martyr to *tic douloureux* in the lower jaw, extending to the ear, and affecting a large portion of the head. The disease, she stated, was of more than nine years' duration, and had never ceased to afflict her for a day during that period, up to her entrance into the hospital. Her appearance was proportionably miserable. The magnet had also been applied in her case, and with similar advantage, as she stated. On the present occasion it was found, on approaching her bed, that she was in consequence free from pain on that morning, and the further aid of the magnet was not needed. 'But cannot you show its power by producing the pain?' inquired a bystander. The suggestion was acted on. The south pole of the magnet was passed from the centre of the chin along the lower jawbone up to the ear. At the third pass the poor woman indicated that the *tic* was commencing, and in a few seconds more the affection was experienced intensely. The process was then stopped, as the experiment had been carried far enough to satisfy all present of its consummation; and after a brief space the presentation of the north pole wholly freed the sufferer from pain. The operator subsequently stated, that by continuing the passes he could have carried the pain on to the production of delirium.

There is a female patient in another ward, who had suffered intense toothache for three months, when, a fortnight since, according to her own evidence, which we have no reason to doubt, it was instantly cured by one application of the magnet, through the medium of a key, and had not returned in the slightest degree up to the period of the visit of which we have given the details.

These are very interesting facts. We submit them to our readers unaccompanied by comment. The specific name given to his instrument by Dr Blundell, is that of 'mineral magnet.' How far its application to disease admits of extension, we are at present ignorant."

**A SOLVENT BANK.**—The best bank ever yet known is a bank of earth; it never refuses to discount to honest labour; and the best share is the plough-share, on which dividends are always liberal.

**AN IRISH BULL OF 1630.**—Nowe that Ireland doth give birthe to strange sortes of men, whose too greate quicknesse of thoughte doth impeede theyre judgmente, this storye whiche I have heard, will shewe. A wealthie lord of the countie of Corke there had a goodlie faire house new-built, but the broken bricke, tiles, sande, lime, stones, and such rubbish, as are commonlie the remnantes of such buildinges, lay confusedlie in heapes, and scattered here ande there; the lord therefore demanded of his surveyor, wherefore the rubbish was not conveyed awaie; the surveyor said, that hee proposed to hyre an hundred carts for the purpose. The lord replied, that the charge of carts might be saved, for a pit might be digged in the grounde, and soe burie it. "Then, my lord," said the surveyor, "I pray you what will wee doe with the earth which wee digge out of the said pitt?" "Why, you coxcombe," said the lord, "canst thou not digge the pitt deepe enough to hold rubbish and all together?"—From the works of Taylor, the Water Poet.

**CAROLAN'S LIBERALITY.**—Carolan never prostituted his muse to party politics or religious bigotry, though attachment to the ancient faith and families of Ireland was the ruling principle of his heart; yet he could discern the virtues and celebrate the praises of those who dissented from the one, or claimed no connection with the other.—Hardiman's *Irish Minstrelsy*.

**FULLER.**—The well-known author of "British Worthies" wrote his own epitaph, as it appears in Westminster Abbey. It consists of only four words, but it speaks volumes, namely, "Here lies Fuller's earth."

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